

Congressman Steve King (R-IA) today issued the following statement regarding National Agriculture Week:

### **Celebrating Iowa's Agriculture Industry**

Congressman Steve King

This week is National Agriculture Week, and it is a time to assess the state of the agriculture industry and to celebrate recent accomplishments in Iowa agriculture.

As I reflect on the snowy winter that just passed and a spring season that will be punctuated with corn planting in Iowa, the creed for the National FFA Organization sticks in my head. That creed begins with "I believe in the future of agriculture." These words have never been truer at any time other than right now.

I believe in the future of agriculture, and more importantly, I believe in the future of agriculture in western Iowa. The thirty-six thousand hard-working farmers in western Iowa deserve a round of applause for their work over the past year.

Western Iowa farmers are national leaders in the production of corn, soybeans, eggs, beef and pork. If you were to place a dollar value on western Iowa's annual agriculture production, the total would be approximately \$4.5 billion per year.

The livestock industry has a long history of success and tradition in western Iowa. We continue that tradition by transferring those skills of animal husbandry from one generation to the next. These farmers produce meat, eggs and milk of the highest quality to help meet the nutritional needs of the people throughout our nation and across the world.

Farmers in the Fifth District are also doing their share to wean the United States off of Middle Eastern oil. They are producing corn that can be turned into ethanol, which can be used as an alternative to gasoline. They are growing soybeans that are turned into bio-diesel, which is used to displace diesel fuel refined from Middle Eastern oil. Our farmers are also leasing small parcels of land to wind energy companies, allowing wind turbines in western Iowa to harvest the energy of the wind. Each of these puzzle pieces goes together to help reduce our dependence on Middle Eastern oil.

Iowa farmers are also leading the way in agriculture exports. In 2008, Iowa's cash farm receipts totaled \$25 billion. Iowa ranked second among all 50 states in agricultural exports, with total exports estimated to be \$7.8 billion. Iowa continues to lead all states in the exportation of soybeans and feed grains.

All of these remarkable statistics show that Iowa has the best farming operations in the world and that the future of agriculture is bright in our state. But beyond the impressive numbers, the character and work ethic of Iowa farmers make our communities great places to live and work.

This week, we give thanks for the successes of Iowa farmers over the past year. We also recognize and celebrate the longstanding and unique contributions that Iowa farmers have made throughout our state and the world.